McGRAW-HILL ADVENTURE BOOKS

THE TROJAN HORSE

by Joanne Mattern
illustrated by David Chestnutt

Mc Graw Hill

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

McGraw-Hill School Division
A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies

Copyright © McGraw-Hill School Division, a Division of the Educational and Professional Publishing Group of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

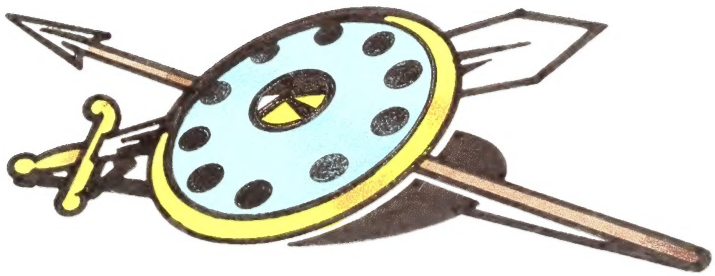
McGraw-Hill School Division
1221 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10020

Book Design and Production: Curriculum Concepts

Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 0-02-274142-4
4 5 6 7 8 9 080 03 02 01 00

http://archive.org/details/trojanhorse00joan

The Trojan Horse



by Joanne Mattern
illustrated by David Chestnutt

McGraw-Hill School Division
New York Farmington

A long time ago, people believed gods and goddesses walked the earth. Among the mightiest were the gods of ancient Greece.

The Greek gods lived high atop Mount Olympus. From there, they could see the world below.

The people of Greece knew the gods were watching them. They pleaded for the gods' help and favor.

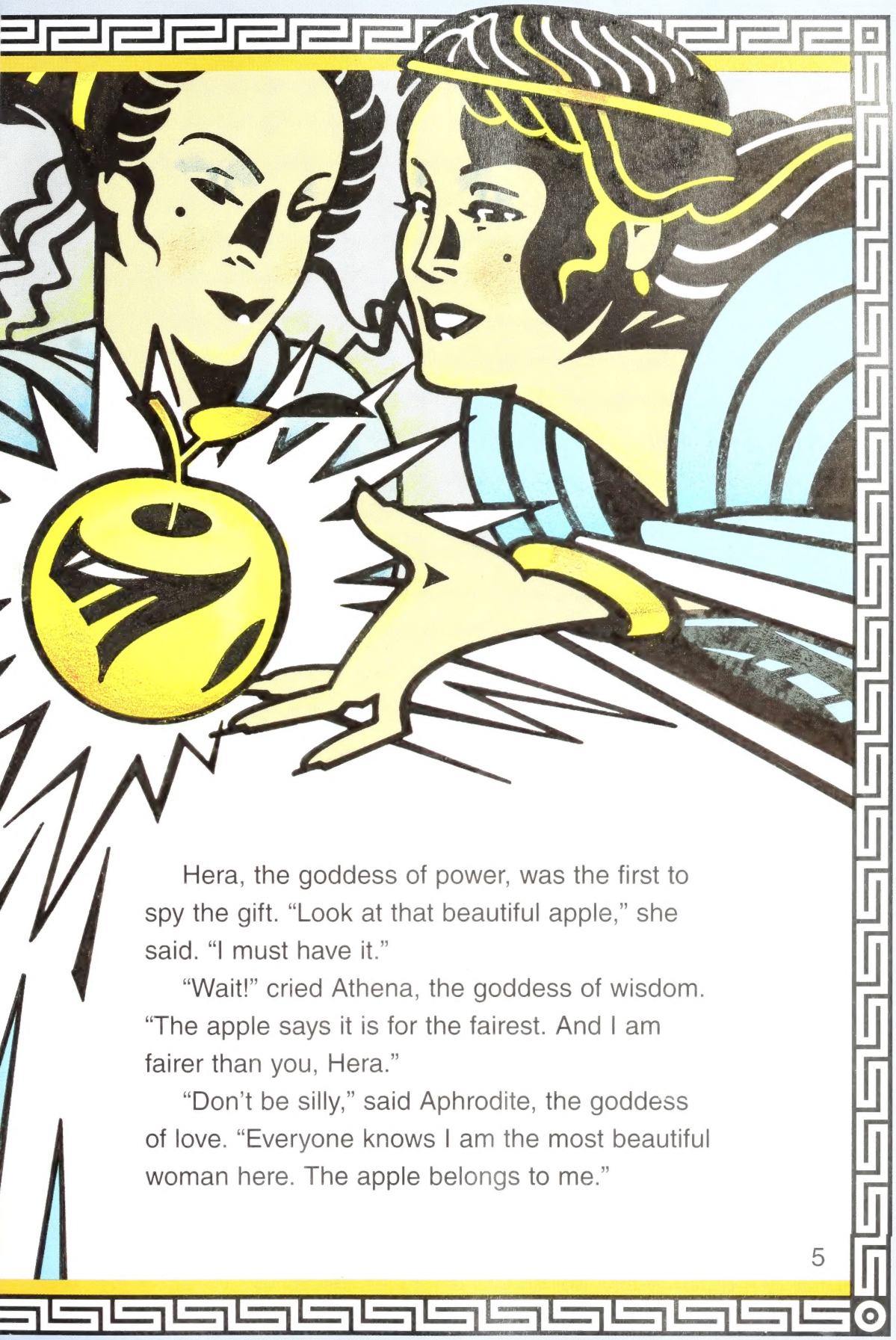
Sometimes the gods and goddesses were good to the people. Other times, they caused great sorrow and destruction.

Just like people, the gods and goddesses sometimes quarreled among themselves. Such quarrels could have serious consequences for the people living below Mount Olympus. In fact, one such quarrel caused the war between Troy and Sparta. The Trojan War was one of the most terrible events of ancient times. And the whole war started because of a wedding feast—and an argument.

The feast was held to celebrate the marriage of mighty King Peleus, a mortal, to the immortal water nymph, Thetis. All the gods and goddesses were there—all except one. Eris, the goddess of conflict, had not been invited.

When Eris heard about the feast, she was furious. "I'll show them," she growled. "I'll bring a gift to the party they shall never forget."

And so Eris slipped into the feast. No one noticed as she laid a golden apple on the table. On it was written, "For the fairest." Then Eris hid in a corner to watch what happened next.



Hera, the goddess of power, was the first to spy the gift. "Look at that beautiful apple," she said. "I must have it."

"Wait!" cried Athena, the goddess of wisdom. "The apple says it is for the fairest. And I am fairer than you, Hera."

"Don't be silly," said Aphrodite, the goddess of love. "Everyone knows I am the most beautiful woman here. The apple belongs to me."

"How dare you!" cried Hera.

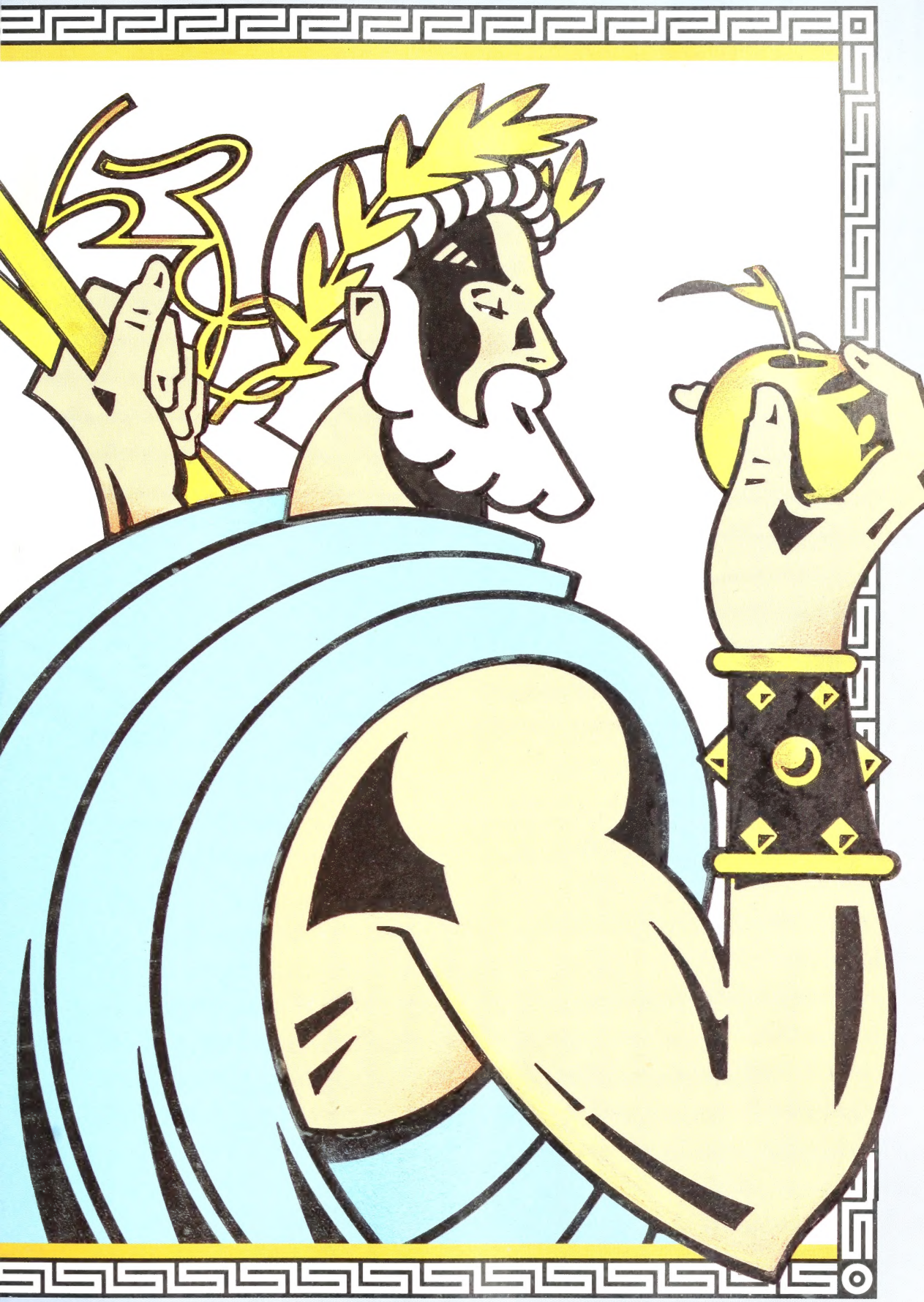
"It's mine!" Athena shouted.

"Give it to me!" Aphrodite screamed.

The argument grew so loud that it reached the ears of Zeus, king of the gods. "Peace!" Zeus yelled. "It is impossible for anyone here to choose fairly among you. We must find a mortal to make the decision. I command you to visit Paris, prince of Troy. Ask him to choose the fairest."

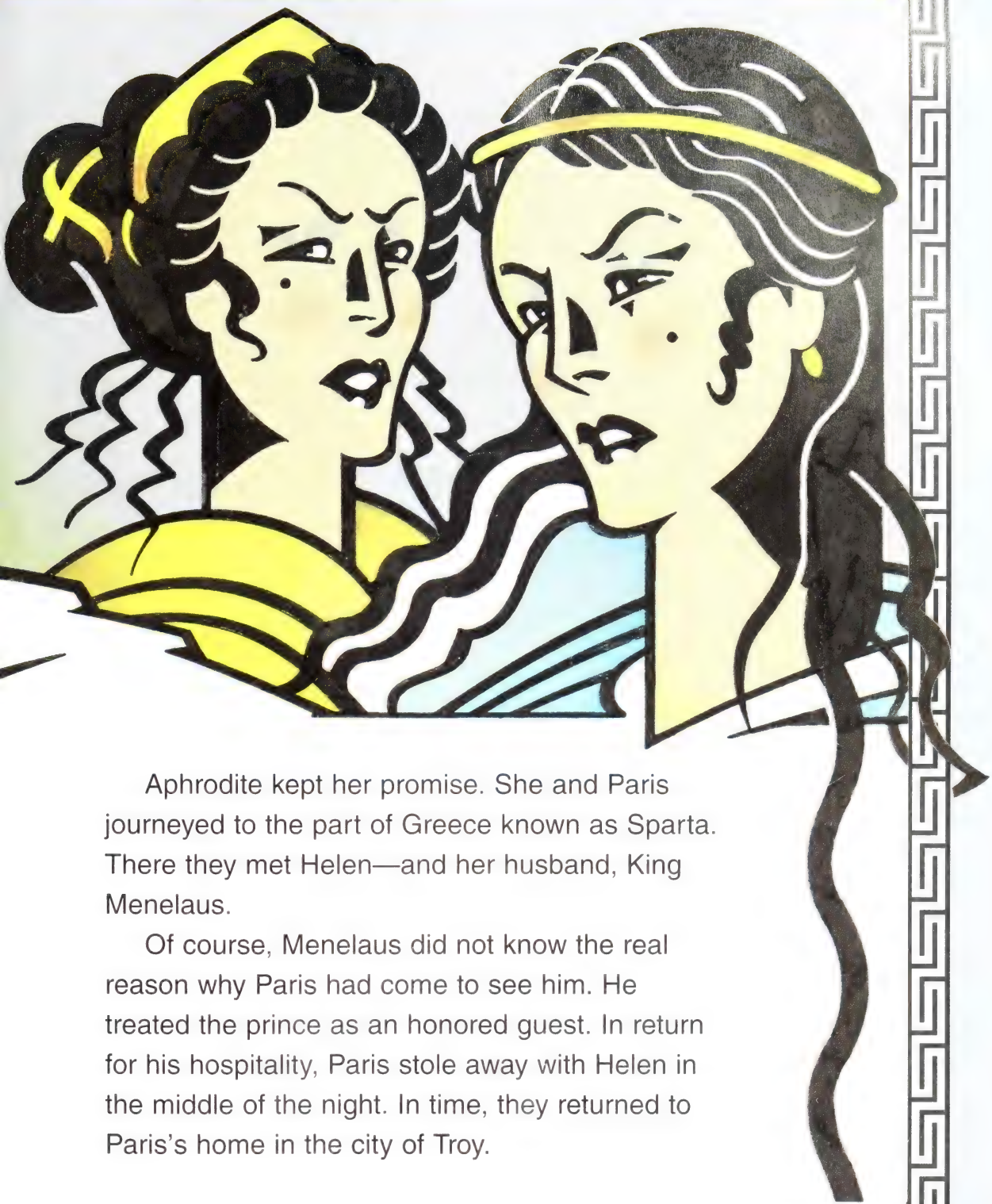
And so Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite left Mount Olympus and went to see Paris. "You must choose which of us is the fairest," Hera said. "Choose me and I will give you great power. You will be the ruler of everything on land and sea."

"No, no!" Athena cried. "Say that I am the fairest and I will give you wisdom. Wouldn't you like to understand all the mysteries of the world and the secrets hidden in men's hearts? Choose me."



"Who cares about all that?" whispered Aphrodite. "I am the goddess of love. If you choose me as the fairest, I will give you the most beautiful woman in the world. Her name is Helen. I promise her to you—if you just pick me."

Paris's heart leaped at the thought of winning Helen, for her beauty was known far and wide. And so he chose Aphrodite as the most beautiful of all the goddesses.

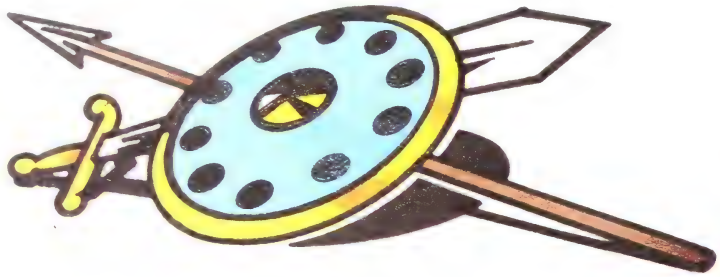


Aphrodite kept her promise. She and Paris journeyed to the part of Greece known as Sparta. There they met Helen—and her husband, King Menelaus.

Of course, Menelaus did not know the real reason why Paris had come to see him. He treated the prince as an honored guest. In return for his hospitality, Paris stole away with Helen in the middle of the night. In time, they returned to Paris's home in the city of Troy.

When Menelaus discovered what had happened, he was very angry. He gathered his armies together and demanded Helen's return.

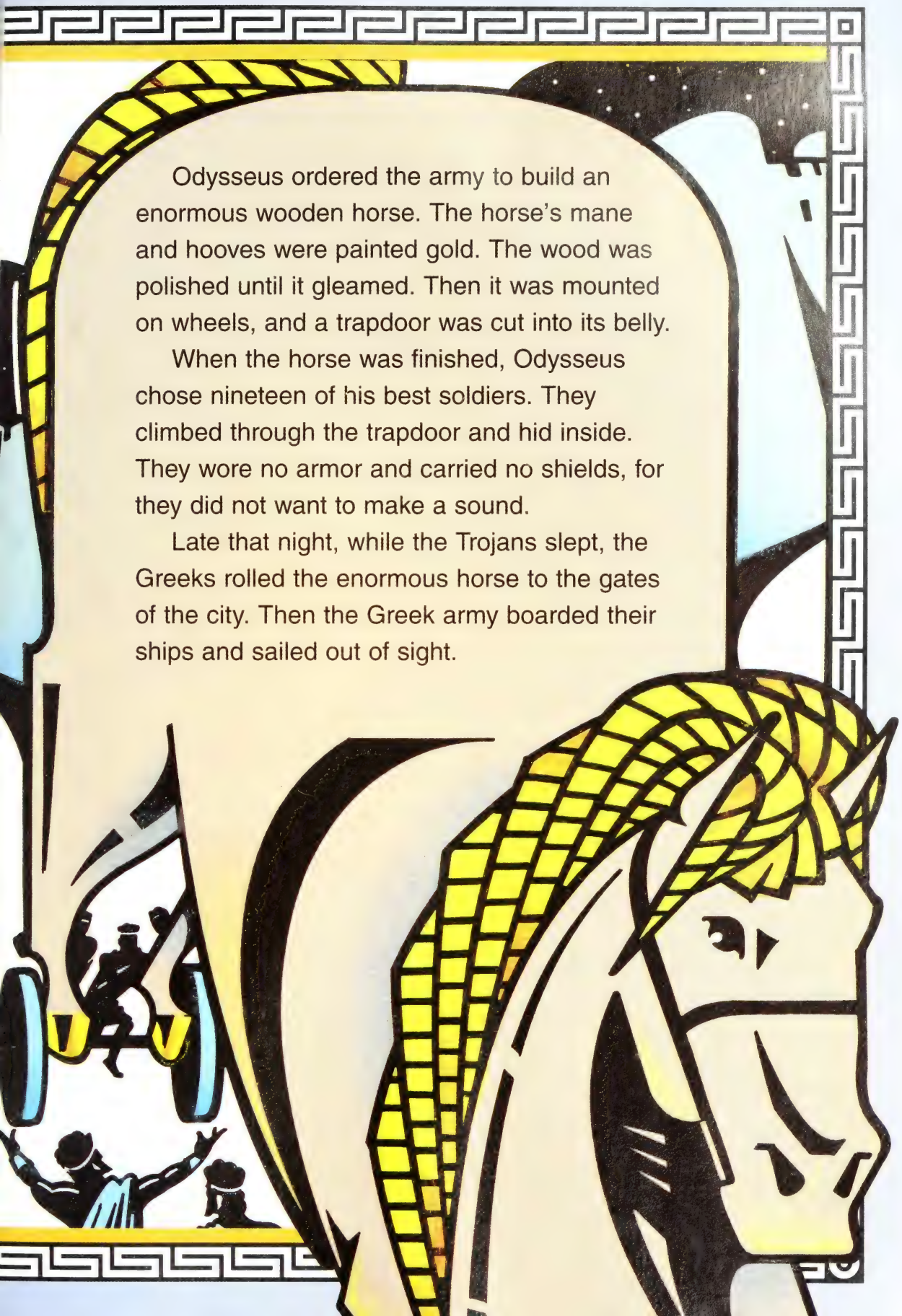
Paris laughed when he heard Menelaus' demand. "Helen is mine now," he said. "You will have to destroy me to win her back." And so Menelaus and the Greeks went to war against Paris, Prince of Troy.



The war between Greece and Troy went on for ten years. Though the Greek army was a mighty one, it could not break through the wall surrounding the city of Troy.

And so the Greek army camped in front of the wall. No one from Troy could leave the city. No one from outside could go in.

One of the greatest of the Greek heroes was Odysseus. Now he was tired of fighting. "There must be a way to get past that wall," he said. Finally, he came up with a plan.



Odysseus ordered the army to build an enormous wooden horse. The horse's mane and hooves were painted gold. The wood was polished until it gleamed. Then it was mounted on wheels, and a trapdoor was cut into its belly.

When the horse was finished, Odysseus chose nineteen of his best soldiers. They climbed through the trapdoor and hid inside. They wore no armor and carried no shields, for they did not want to make a sound.

Late that night, while the Trojans slept, the Greeks rolled the enormous horse to the gates of the city. Then the Greek army boarded their ships and sailed out of sight.

The next morning, the Trojans saw no ships in the harbor and no soldiers on the beach. The Greeks were gone. The war was over!

The people of Troy raced out of the city gates, shouting with joy. Then they stopped and gazed in wonder. What was this magnificent horse standing before the gates?

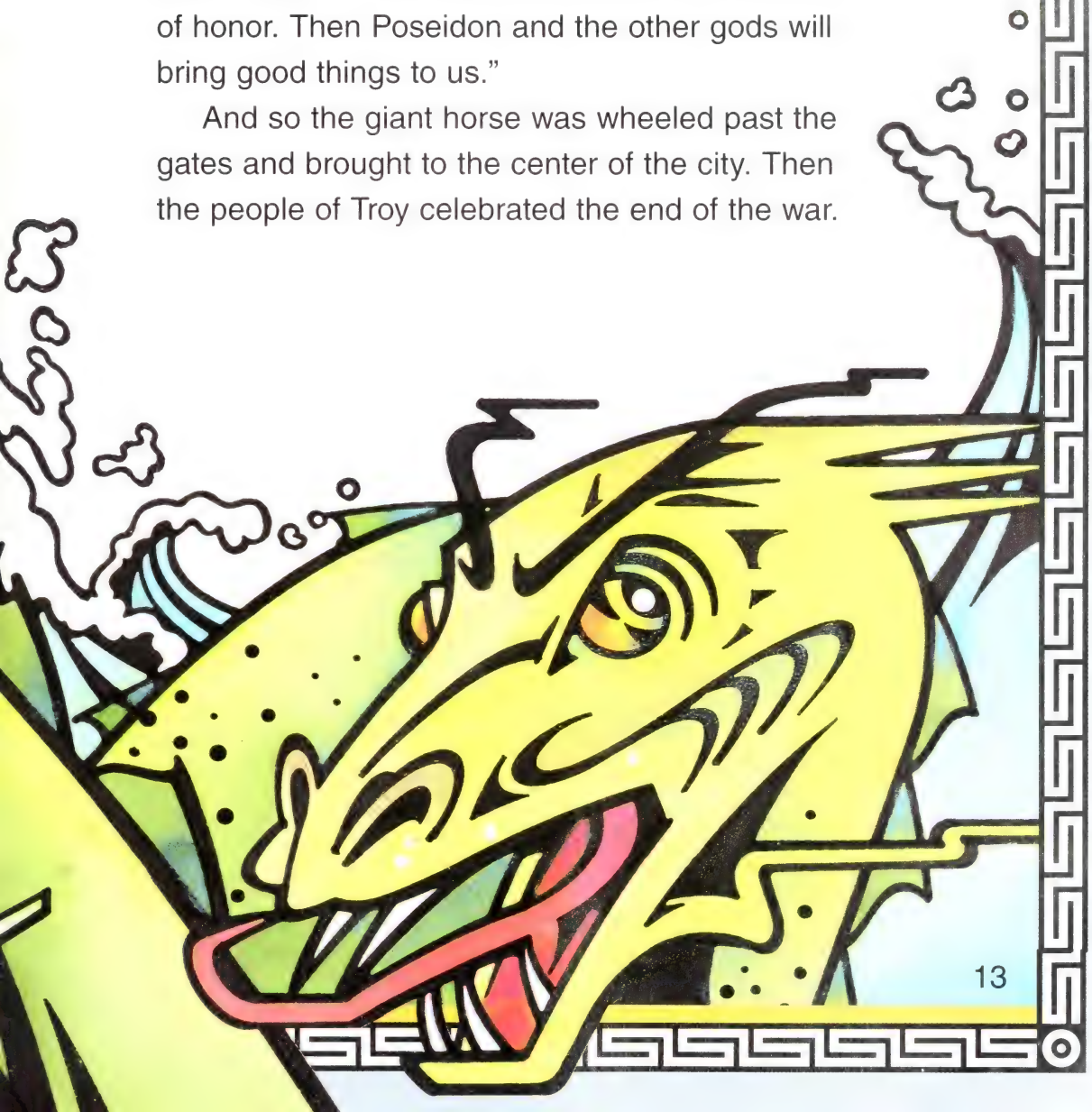
"It is a gift from the Greeks!" shouted the crowd. "Let us bring it into the city!"

"No!" replied a man named Laocoön. "I do not trust the Greeks, and I do not trust this horse. It is an evil trick. We should take an axe and chop it into pieces!"

Poseidon, the god of the sea, heard Laocoön. He was a friend of the Greeks and decided to help them. So he sent a dreadful sea serpent onto the beach. It snatched Laocoön up in its mighty jaws, then slid back into the waves.

The crowd watched in horror. "It is a sign!" someone shouted. "Laocoön was destroyed because he said this horse was evil. We must take this gift into our city. Let us put it in a place of honor. Then Poseidon and the other gods will bring good things to us."

And so the giant horse was wheeled past the gates and brought to the center of the city. Then the people of Troy celebrated the end of the war.



Finally, everyone in the city went to sleep, even the soldiers who watched the gates. Inside the horse, Odysseus listened to the silence.

Slowly, silently, he pulled up the trapdoor. He dropped a long rope through the opening and slid to the ground. All was quiet and still.

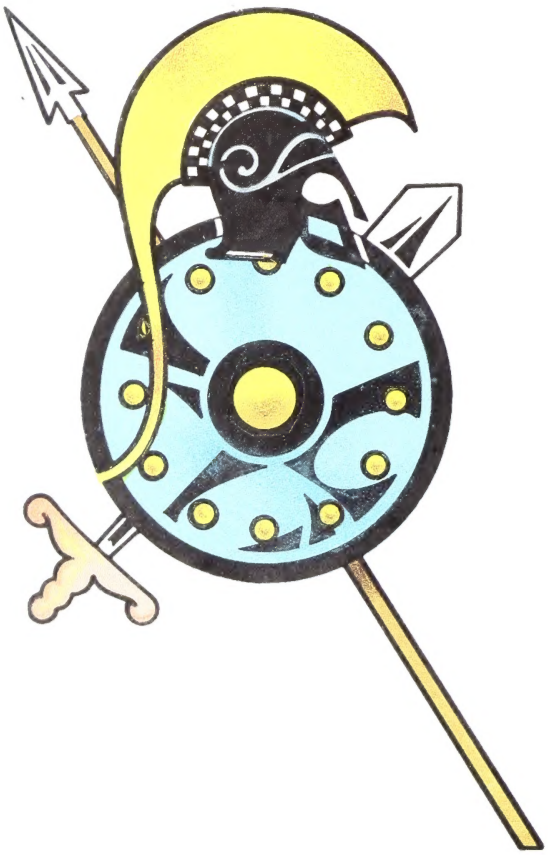
"All right," Odysseus whispered. "Let's go!"

One by one, the Greek soldiers slipped from the horse and spread through the city streets. Odysseus hurried to open the city gates.

The Greek army waited outside. They had not sailed for home at all, but had only hidden out of sight. Now they streamed into the city.

The battle that followed was one of the fiercest ever seen. When dawn rose over the city, Troy was in ruins. All its people were either dead or taken prisoner.

What a war could not achieve in ten long years, a clever plan won in a single night. Helen was returned to her husband. And at long last, Odysseus and the Greeks sailed for home.



Activities
for School and Home

Write Your Own Version When Paris chose Aphrodite as the fairest in the land, his choice set off a chain of events that led to the Trojan War. But what if Paris had chosen Athena, goddess of wisdom, over the beautiful Aphrodite? Work with a partner to rewrite the tale with Paris choosing wisdom over beauty.

Write a Description The Greeks used the power of their thinking, not their physical strength, to win the Trojan War. They used brains over brawn. Think about a time when you used brains over brawn. Write a description of your experience for a family member or friend.

McGraw-Hill
Adventure Books

ISBN 0-02-147745-0

Internet Archive
The Trojan Horse
ISBN: 0021477450
UsedVeryGood
2012-03-29
E1121C2
1

McGraw-Hill School Division
A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies

6